



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

NEWS RELEASE

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North Dakota Department of Health Keeping a Close Watch for Signs of Enterovirus D-68 (EV-D68) Outbreaks

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health is monitoring the state for severe cases of Enterovirus D-68 (EV-D68), a virus that has caused severe respiratory illness in clusters of hospitalized children in Missouri and Illinois, and is suspected of sickening people in several other states.

“No EV-D68 cases have been confirmed in North Dakota at this time,” according to Jill Baber, epidemiologist with the North Dakota Department of Health. “However, we are working with hospitals in the state to report and test suspected clusters of respiratory illness in hospitalized patients, especially in children admitted to intensive care. We do expect that we will see at least some of these cases.”

Some clinics are reporting seeing more children present with mild respiratory symptoms, but whose parents are concerned about EV-D68. Children with mild symptoms, such as a runny or stuffy nose or a minor cough, can usually be treated at home. However, if any child experiences trouble breathing, medical care should be sought immediately.

If a number of similar respiratory illnesses are identified, the NDDoH will work with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to determine if the cluster has been caused by EV-D68. Hospitals will be able to identify patients that test positive for either a rhinovirus or enterovirus, but additional testing through the CDC will be needed to identify if the virus is EV-D68.

Enteroviruses are common viruses that affect an estimated 10 to 15 million people in the United States each year, most often in the summer and fall. EV-D68 is less common than other enteroviruses. Infected individuals report mild to severe respiratory illness that may include cough, trouble breathing, and wheezing. The virus is most likely spread through coughs and

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sneezes or through contact with saliva, mucus or feces or surfaces contaminated with those substances. There is no antiviral or other specific treatment or vaccine available for EV-D68. Although most infections will be mild and resolve on their own, severe hospitalized cases may require supportive care.

To reduce the risk of transmitting EV-D68 and other respiratory viruses, people should

- Frequently wash hands with soap and water, especially
 - after blowing your nose or covering a cough or sneeze
 - after using the bathroom or changing diapers
 - before and after preparing food
 - before eating
- Avoid close contact with sick people
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces
- Stay home when not feeling well
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue and dispose of the tissue

For more information, contact Jill Baber, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.2378.

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